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K
GEBIR;

A
POEM,

IN
SEVEN BOOKS.



London,

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1798.

GERMANY

POEM

BY J. G. COOK



PREFACE.

IT may possibly save some trouble, and obviate some errors, if I take a cursory review of my own performance. Not that I would prevent others from criticising it, but that I may explain at large, and state distinctly, it's origin and design. This Poem, the fruit of Idleness and Ignorance—for had I been a botanist or mineralogist it never had been written—was principally written in Wales. The subject was taken, or rather the shadow of the subject, from a wild and incoherent, but fanciful, Arabian Romance. On the shelf of a circulating library, I met with a Critique on the various Novels of our Country. Tho' the work itself had nothing remarkable in it, except indeed we reckon remarkable the pertness and petulance of female criticism; yet it presented to me, at the conclusion, the story of Gebirus and Charoba. A Poem, like mine, descriptive of men and manners, should never be founded totally on fiction. But that which is originally fiction may cease in effect to be so:—the tears of Andromache are as precious as those of Sapphira.

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I have availed myself merely of the names, and taken but few bare circumstances. I have followed no man closely; nor have I turned from my road because another stood in it: tho' perhaps I have momentarily, in passing, caught the object that attracted him. I have written in blank verse, because there never was a poem in rhyme that grew not tedious in a thousand lines. My choice is, undoubtedly the most difficult of the two: for, how many have succeeded in rhyme, in the structure at least; how few comparatively in blank verse. There is Akenside, there is Armstrong, there is, above all, the poet of our republic. But in most others we meet with stiffness instead of strength, and weakness instead of ease. I am aware how much I myself stand in need of favor. I demand some little from Justice; I entreat much more from Candor. If there are, now in England, ten men of taste and genius who will applaud my Poem, I declare myself fully content: I will call for a division; I shall count a majority.

ERRATA.

PAGE	VERSE	
4	87	for <i>were</i> read <i>where</i>
18	194	for <i>first</i> read <i>fixt</i>
19	207	for <i>cold</i> read <i>pale</i>
22	36	for <i>Sadad</i> read <i>Sidad</i>
23	42	for <i>here</i> read <i>hear</i>
27	163	dele the mark of interrogation
32	293	for <i>they</i> read <i>their</i>
46	91	for <i>sounds</i> read <i>sound</i>
51	238	for <i>vilious</i> read <i>viscous</i>
52	250	comma after <i>cried</i>
53	16	for <i>Ibericans</i> read <i>Iberians</i>
54	36	for <i>Bereo</i> read <i>Beroe</i>
—	38	comma after <i>mildnatured</i>
—	46	for <i>wretched</i> read <i>wreathed</i>
57	15	for <i>berry</i> read <i>beryl</i>
—	—	for <i>that</i> read <i>than</i>
—	120	after <i>vines</i> insert <i>and</i>
58	142	for <i>deep</i> read <i>steep</i>
59	157	for <i>Lacynthus</i> read <i>Zacynthus</i>
—	166	for <i>Sicalian</i> read <i>Sicanian</i>
—	171	for <i>it roll</i> read " <i>the roar</i> "
60	192	period after <i>home</i>
61	212	for <i>exhaled</i> read <i>inhaled</i>
62	264	dele the parenthesis
—	269	for <i>assay</i> read <i>essay</i>
64	295	dele the comma after <i>vigorous</i>
65	12	for <i>wind</i> read <i>hind</i>
—	14	for <i>and</i> read <i>one</i>
66	35	for <i>pused</i> read <i>push'd</i>
67	72	for <i>often sighed</i> read <i>often she sighed</i>
68	87	comma after <i>forests</i>
—	97	for <i>she</i> read <i>he</i>
69	112	for <i>priest</i> read <i>priests</i>

ERRATA

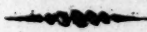
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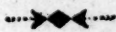
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GEBIR.



BOOK I.



WHEN old Silenus called the Satyrs home,
Satyrs then tender-hooft and ruddy-horn'd,
With Bacchus and the Nymphs, he sometimes rose
Amidst the tale or pastoral, and shewd
The light of purest wisdom; and the God
Scatter'd with wholesome fruit the pleasant plains.

Ye woody vales of Cambria! and ye hills
That hide in heaven your summits and your name!
Your ancient songs, and breezes pure, invite
Me from my noon-tide rambles, and the force 10
Of high example influences my lay.

I sing the fates of Gebir! how he dwelt
Among those mountain-caverns, which retain
His labours yet, vast halls, and flowing wells,
Nor have forgotten their old master's name
Though sever'd from his people: how, incens'd

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By meditating on primeval wrongs,
 He blew his battle-horn, at which uprose
 Whole nations: how, ten thousand of most might
 He called aloud; and soon Charoba saw 20
 His dark helm hover o'er the land of Nile.

What should the damsel do? should royal knees
 Bend suppliant? or defenceless hands engage
 Men of gigantic force, gigantic arms?
 For, 'twas reported, that nor sword sufficed,
 Nor shield immense, nor coat of massive mail;
 But, that upon their tow'ring heads they bore
 Each a huge stone, refulgent as the stars.
 This told she Dalica—then earnest cried
 " If, on your bosom laying down my head, 30
 I sobb'd away the sorrows of a child;
 If I have always, and Heav'n knows I have,
 Next to a mother's held a nurse's name,
 Succour this one distress! recal those days;
 Love me; though 'twere because you lov'd me then."

But, whether confident in magic rites,
 Or touch'd with sexual pride to stand implor'd,
 Dalica smil'd; then spake: " Away those fears.
 Though stronger than the strongest of his kind,
 He falls; on me devolve that charge; he falls. 40
 Rather than fly him, stoop thou to allure,
 Nay, journey to his tents: a city stood

Upon that coast, they say, by Sidad built,
 Whose father Gad built Gades; on this ground
 Perhaps he sees an ample room for war.
 Persuade him to restore the walls himself,
 In honor of his ancestors, persuade—
 But wherefore this advice? young, unespoused,
 Charoba want persuasions! and a queen!”

“ O Dalica !” the shudd’ring maid exclaim’d, 50
 “ Could I encounter that fierce frightful man?
 Could I speak? no, nor sigh !” “ And canst thou
 reign ?”
 Cried Dalica ; “ yield empire, or comply.”

Unfixt, though seeming fixt, her eyes down-cast,
 The wonted buz and bustle of the court
 From far, through sculptur’d galleries, met her ear ;
 Then lifting up her head, the evening sun
 Pour’d a fresh splendor on her burnish’d throne,
 The fair Charoba, the young queen, complied.

But Gebir, when he heard of her approach, 60
 Laid by his orbed shield, his vizor-helm,
 His buckler and his corslet he laid by,
 And bade that none attend him : at his side
 Two faithful dogs that urge the silent course,
 Shaggy, deep-chested, crouched : the crocodile
 Crying oft made them raise their flaccid ears,

And push their heads within their master's hand.
 There was a bright'ning paleness in his face,
 Such as Diana rising o'er the rocks
 Shower'd on the lonely Latmian ; on his brow 70
 Sorrow there was, yet nought was there severe.
 But when the royal damsel first he saw,
 Faint, hanging on her handmaids, and her knees
 Tott'ring, as from the motion of the car,
 His eyes looked earnest on her ; and those eyes
 Show'd, if they had not, that they might have, lov'd,
 For there was pity in them at that hour.
 With gentle speech, but more with gentle looks,
 He sooth'd her ; but, lest pity go beyond,
 Bending, he kiss'd her garment, and retir'd. 80
 He went : nor slumber'd in the sultry noon,
 When viands rich, and gen'rous wines persuade,
 And slumber most refreshes ; nor at night,
 When heavy dews are laden with disease ;
 And blindness waits not there for ling'ring age.
 Ere morning dawn'd behind him, he arriv'd
 At those rich meadows where young Tamar fed
 The royal flocks, entrusted to his care,
 Now, said he to himself, will I repose
 At least this burden on a brother's breast : 90
 His brother stood before him : he, amaz'd,
 Rear'd suddenly his head, and thus began.
 " Is it thou, brother ! Tamar, is it thou !
 Why, standing on the valley's utmost verge,

Lookest thou on that dull and dreary shore
 Where many a league Nile blackens all the sand.
 And why that sadness? when I passed our sheep
 The dew-drops were not shaken off the bar,
 Therefore if one be wanting 'tis untold."

Yes! one is wanting, nor is that untold, 100
 Said Tamar, and this dull and dreary shore
 Is neither dull nor dreary at all hours."
 Whereon, the tear stole silent down his cheek,
 Silent, but not by Gebir unobserv'd:
 Wondering he gazed awhile, and pitying spake:—
 "Let me approach thee: does the morning light
 Scatter this wan suffusion o'er thy brow,
 This faint blue lustre under both thine eyes?"
 "O, brother, is this pity or reproach,
 Cried Tamar,—cruel if it be reproach,
 If pity—O how vain!"

"Whate'er it be 110
 That grieves thee, I will pity; thou but speak,
 And I can tell thee, Tamar, pang for pang."

"Gebir! then more than brothers are we now!
 Every thing—take my hand—will I confess.
 I neither feed the flock, nor watch the fold;
 How can I, lost in love? But, Gebir, why
 That anger which has risen to your cheek?"

Can other men? Could you? What, no reply!
 And still more anger, and still worse conceal'd! 120
 Are these your promises; your pity this?"

"Tamar, I well may pity what I feel—
 Mark me aright—I feel for thee—proceed—
 Relate me all." "Then will I all relate."
 Said the young shepherd, gladden'd from his heart,
 "'Twas evening, though not sun-set, and spring-tide
 Level with these green meadows, seem'd still higher:
 'Twas pleasant; and I loosen'd from my neck
 The pipe you gave me, and began to play.
 O that I ne'er had learnt the tuneful art! 130
 It always brings us enemies or love!
 Well, I was playing—when above the waves
 Some swimmer's head methought I saw ascend,
 I, sitting still, survey'd it, with my pipe
 Awkwardly held before my lips half clos'd.
 Gebir! it was a nymph! a nymph divine!
 I cannot wait describing how she came,
 How I was sitting, how she first assum'd
 The sailor: of what happened, there remains
 Enough to say, and too much to forget. 140
 The sweet deceiver stept upon this bank
 Before I was aware; for, with surprize
 Moments fly rapid as with love itself.
 Stooping to tune afresh the hoarsened reed,
 I heard a rustling; and where that arose

My glance first lighted on her nimble feet.
 Her feet resembled those long shells explored
 By him, who to befriend his steeds' dim sight,
 Would blow the pungent powder in their eye.—
 Her eyes too ! O immortal Gods ! her eyes 150
 Resembled—what could they resemble—what
 Ever resemble those ! E'en her attire
 Was not of wonted woof nor vulgar art :
 Her mantle shew'd the yellow samphire-pod,
 Her girdle, the dove-color'd wave serene.
 " Shepherd," said she, " and will you wrestle now,
 And with the sailor's hardier race engage ?"
 I was rejoiced to hear it, and contrived
 How to keep up contention. — Could I fail
 By pressing not too strongly, still to press. 160
 " Whether a shepherd, as indeed you seem,
 Or whether of the hardier race you boast,
 I am not daunted, no : I will engage."
 But first," said she, what wager will you lay ?"
 " A sheep," I answered, " add whate'er you will."
 " I cannot," she replied, " make that return :
 Our hidid vessels, in their pitchy round,
 Seldom, unless from rapine, hold a sheep.
 But I have sinuous shells, of pearly hue
 Within, and they that lustre have imbibed 170
 In the sun's palace porch ; where, when unyoked,
 His charriot wheel stands midway in the wave.
 Shake one, and it awakens ; then apply

Its polished lips to your attentive ear,
 And it remembers its august abodes,
 And murmurs as the ocean murmurs there.
 And I have others given me by the nymphs,
 Of sweeter sound than any pipe you have. —
 But we, by Neptune, for no pipe contend ;
 This time a sheep I win, a pipe the next. 180
 Now came she forward, eager to engage ;
 But, first her dress, her bosom then, survey'd,
 And heav'd it, doubting if she could deceive.
 Her bosom seem'd, inclos'd in haze like heav'n,
 To baffle touch ; and rose forth undefined.
 Above her knees she drew the robe succinct ;
 Above her breast, and just below her arms :
 " This will perserve my breath, when tightly bound,
 If struggle and equal strength should so constrain."
 Thus, pulling hard to fasten it, she spoke, 190
 And, rushing at me, closed. I thrill'd throughout
 And seem'd to lessen and shrink up with cold.
 Again, with violent impulse gushed my blood ;
 And hearing nought external, thus absorb'd,
 I heard it, rushing through each turbid vein,
 Shake my unsteady swimming sight in air.
 Yet, with unyielding, though uncertain arms
 I clung around her neck ; the vest beneath
 Rustled against our slippery limbs, entwined :
 Often mine, springing with eluded force, 200
 Started aside, and trembled, till replaced.

And when I most succeeded, as I thought,
 My bosom and my throat felt so comprest
 That life was almost quivering on my lips.
 Yet nothing was there painful ! these are signs
 Of secret arts, and not of human might,
 What arts I cannot tell : I only know
 My eyes grew dizzy, and my strength decay'd,
 I was indeed o'ercome !—With what regret,
 And more, with what confusion, when I reached 210
 The fold, and yielding up the sheep, she cried,
 “ This pays a shepherd to a conquering maid.”
 She smil'd, and more of pleasure than disdain
 Was in her dimpled chin, and liberal lip,
 And eyes that languished, lengthening, just like love.
 She went away : I, on the wicker gate
 Lean'd, and could follow with my eyes alone.
 The sheep she carried easy as a cloak.
 But when I heard its bleating as I did,
 And saw, she hastening on, its hinder feet 220
 Struggle, and from her snowy shoulder slip—
 One shoulder its poor efforts had unveil'd,
 Then, all my passions mingling fell in tears !
 Restless then ran I to the highest ground
 To watch her ; she was gone ; gone down to the tide ;
 And the long moon-beam on the hard wet sand
 Lay like a jasper column half uprear'd.”

“ But, Tamar ! tell me, will she not return ? ”

“ She will return : but not before the moon

Again is at its full ; She promis'd this ; 230
But when she promis'd I could not reply."

“ By all the Gods ! I pity thee ! go on—
Fear not my anger, look not on my shame ;
For, when a lover only hears of love,
He finds his folly out, and is ashamed.
Away with watchful nights, and lonely days,
Contempt of earth, and aspect up to heaven,
With contemplation, with humility,—
A tatter’d cloak that pride wears when deform’d—
Away with all that hides me from myself, 240
Parts me from others, whispers I am wise—
From our own wisdom less is to be reaped
Than from the barest folly of our friend.
Tamar ! thy pastures large and rich, afford
Flowers to thy bees, and herbage to thy sheep,
But, battened on too much, the poorest croft
Of thy poor neighbour yields what thine denies.”

They hastened to the camp ; and Gebir there
Resolved his native country to forego —
Ordered, that from those ruins to their right 250
They forthwith raise a city : Tamar heard
With wonder, though in passing 'twas half-told,
His brother's love ; and sigh'd upon his own.

End of Book the First.

GEBIR.

BOOK II.

THE Gadite men the royal charge obey.
 Now fragments, weigh'd up from th' uneven streets,
 Leave the ground black beneath ; again the sun
 Shines into what were porches, and on steps
 Once warm with frequentation — clients, friends,
 All morning — satcheld idlers all mid-day,
 Lying half-up, and languid, though at games.

Some raise the painted pavement, some on wheels
 Draw slow its laminous length, some intersperse
 Salt waters thro' the sordid heaps, and seize 10
 The flowers and figures starting fresh to view.
 Others rub hard large masses, and essay
 To polish into white what they misdeem
 The growing green of many trackless years.
 Far off at intervals, the ax resounds
 With regular strong stroke, and nearer home
 Dull falls the mallet with long labor fringed.
 Here, arches are discover'd, there, huge beams

Resist the hatchet, but in fresher air,
 Soon drop away: there lies a marble, squar'd 20
 And smoothen'd, some high pillar for its base
 Chose it, which now lies ruin'd in the dust.
 Clearing the soil at bottom, they espy
 A crevice: they, intent on treasure, strive
 Strenuous, and groan, to move it: one exclaims
 "I hear the rusty metal grate: it moves!"
 Now, overturning it, backward they start;
 And stop again, and see a serpent pant,
 See his throat thicken, and the crisped scales
 Rise ruffled; while upon the middle fold 30
 He keeps his wary head and blinking eye,
 Curling more close, and crouching ere he strike.
 Go mighty men, and ruin cities, go
 And be such treasure portions to your heirs.

Six days they labour'd: on the seventh day
 Returning, all their labours were destroyed.
 'Twas not by mortal hand, or from their tents
 'Twere visible; for these were now removed
 Above, where neither noxious mist ascends,
 Nor the way wearies ere the work begin. 40
 There Gebir, pierced with sorrow, spake these words.

"Ye men of Gades, armed with brazen shields;
 And ye of near Tartessus, where the shore
 Stoops to receive the tribute which all owe

To Bœtis, and his banks, for their attire ;
Ye too whom Durius bore on level meads !
Inherent in your hearts is bravery ;
For earth contains no nation where abounds
The warlike horse and not the warlike man.
But neither Soldier, now, nor steed, avails ! 30
Nor steed nor Soldier can oppose the Gods ;
Nor is there aught above like Jove himself,
Nor weighs against his purpose, when once fixt,
Aught but, with supplicating knee, the prayers.
Swifter than light are they ; and every face
Though different, glows with beauty : at the throne
Of mercy, when clouds shut it from mankind,
They fall bare-bosom'd ; and indignant Jove
Drops at the soothing sweetness of their voice
The thunder from his hand. Let us arise 60
On these high places, daily, beat our breast,
Prostrate ourselves, and deprecate his wrath."

The people bow'd their bodies and obey'd.
Nine mornings, with white ashes on their heads,
Lamented they their toil each night o'erthrown.
And now the largest orbit of the year,
Leaning o'er black Mocattam's rubied brow,
Proceeded slow, majestic, and serene:
Now looked not further than the nearest cliff,
And crimson light struck soft the phosphor wave. 70
Then Gebir spake to Tamar in these words:—

“ Tamar ! I am thy elder, and thy king,
But am thy brother too, nor ever said,
“ Give me thy secret, and become my slave,”
But haste thee not away : I will myself
Await the nymph, disguised in thy attire.”

Then starting from attention, 'Tamar cried,
“ Brother ! in sacred truth it cannot be !
My life is yours, my love must be my own.

O, surely he who seeks a second love,
Never felt one ; or 'tis not one I feel.”

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But Gebir with complacent smile replied,
“ Go then, fond Tamer, go in happy hour.
But ere thou goest, ponder in thy breast,
And well bethink thee, least thou part deceiv'd,
Will she disclose to thee the mysteries
Of our calamity ? and unconstrain'd ?

When even her love thy strength was to disclose.

My heart, indeed, is full : but witness, heaven !

My people, not my passion, fills my heart.”

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“ Then let me kiss thy garment, said the youth,
And heaven be with thee, and on me thy grace.”

Him then the monarch thus once more addressed,
“ Be of good courage : hast thou yet forgot
What chaplets languished round thy unburnt hair,
In color, like some tall smooth beech's leaves
Curl'd by autumnal suns ? ”—How flattery
Excites a pleasant, soothes a painful shame !

" These," amid stifled blushes, Tamar said,
 " Were of the flowering raspberry and vine: 100
 But ah! the seasons will not wait for love,
 Seek out some other now." They parted here:
 And Gebir, bending through the woodlands, cull'd
 The creeping vine and viscous raspberry,
 Less green and less compliant than they were,
 And twisted in those mossy tufts that grow
 On brakes of roses, when the roses fade;
 And as he pass'd along, the little hinds
 That shook for bristly herds the foodful bough,
 Wonder, stand still, gaze, and trip satisfied; 110
 Pleas'd more, if chesnut out of prickly husk
 Shot from the sandal, roll along the glade.

And thus unnoticed went he, and untired
 Stept up the acclivity; and as he stept,
 And as the garlands nodded o'er his brow,
 Sudden, from under a close alder, sprang
 Th' expectant nymph, and seiz'd him unaware.
 He stagger'd at the shock: his feet not firm'd
 Slipt backward from the wither'd grass short graz'd;
 But striking out one arm, though without aim, 120
 Then grasping with his other he inclos'd
 The struggler; she gain'd not one step's retreat,
 Urging with open hands against his throat
 Intense; now holding in her breath constrain'd,
 Now pushing with quick impulse and by starts,

Till the dust blackened upon every pore.
 Nearer he drew her, and still nearer, clasp'd
 Above the knees midway ; and now one arm
 Fell ; and her other, lapsing o'er the neck
 Of Gebir, swung against his back incurved, 130
 The swoln veins glowing deep ; and with a groan
 On his broad shoulder fell her face reclin'd.

Whether, while Tamar tarried, came desire,
 And she, grown languid, loosed the wings of love,
 Which she before held proudly at her will ;
 Or whether Jove, in pity to mankind,
 When from his crystal fount, the visual orbs
 He fill'd with piercing ether, and endued
 With somewhat of omnipotence—ordain'd
 That never two fair forms, at once, torment 140
 The human heart, and draw it different ways—
 The nymph divine, the magic mistress fail'd.
 Recovering, still half resting on the turf,
 She look'd up wildly, and could now descry
 The kingly brow, arched loftly for command.

“ Traitor ! ” said she, undaunted — though amaze
 Threw o'er her varying cheek the air of fear—
 “ Thinkest thou thus, that with impunity
 Thou hast, forsooth, deceiv'd me ? Dar'st thou deem
 Those eyes not hateful that have seen me fall ? 160
 O heaven ! soon may they close on my disgrace.

Merciless man ; what ! for one sheep estranged,
 Hast thou thrown into dungeons, and of day
 Amerc'd thy shepherd ? Hast thou, while the iron
 Pierc'd thro' his tender limbs into his soul,
 By threats, by tortures, torn out that offence,
 And heard him (O could I) avow his love.
 Say, hast thou ? cruel, hateful,—ah, my fears !
 I feel them true ! speak, tell me, are they true ?”
 She, blending thus intreaty with reproach, 160
 Bent forward ; as tho' falling on her knee,
 Whence she had hardly ris'n ; and at this pause
 Shed from her large dark eyes a shower of tears.
 Th' Iberian King her sorrow thus consol'd.
 Weep no more, heavenly damsel, weep no more.
 Neither by force withheld, or choice estranged ;
 Thy Tamar lives, and only lives for thee.
 Happy, thrice happy, you ! 'Tis me alone
 Whom heaven, and earth, and ocean, with one hate
 Conspire on ; and throughout each path pursue. 170
 Whether in waves beneath or skies above,
 Thou hast thy habitation, 'tis from heaven
 From heaven alone, such power, such charms descend.
 Wilt thou discover whence that ruin comes
 Each night upon our city ; whence are heard
 Those yells of rapture round our falling walls :
 In our affliction can the Gods delight,
 Or meet oblation for the Nymphs are tears ?”
 He spake ; and indignation sunk in woe.

Which she perceiving, pride refresh'd her heart, 180
 Hope wreath'd her mouth with smiles, and she
 exclaim'd—

“ Neither the Gods afflict you, nor the Nymphs.
 Return me him who won my heart, return
 Him whom my bosom pants for, as the steeds
 In the sun's charriot for the western wave,
 The Gods will prosper thee, and Tamar prove
 How Nymphs the torments that they cause assuage.
 Promise me this ! indeed I think thou hast ;
 But 'tis so pleasing, promise it once more—
 Once more I promise,” cried the gladdened king : 190
 “ By my right-hand, and by myself I swear,
 And ocean's Gods, and heaven's Gods, I adjure,
 Thou shalt be Tamar's ; Tamar shall be thine.”

five
 Then she, regarding him, long first, replied.
 “ I have thy promise : take thou my advice.
 Gebir, this land of Egypt is a land
 Of incantation ; demons rule these waves ;
 These are against thee ; these thy works destroy.
 Where thou hast built thy palace, and hast left
 The seven pillars to remain in front, 200
 Sacrifice there ; and all these rites observe.
 Go, but go early, ere the gladsome Hours
 Strew saffron in the path of rising Morn ;
 Ere the bee, buzzing o'er flowers fresh disclos'd,
 Examine where he may the best alight

Nor scatter off the bloom ; ere cold-lipt herds *pale*
 Crop the cold herbage round each other's bed ;
 Lead seven bulls, well pastur'd and well form'd,
 Their necks unblemished and their horns unring'd,
 And at each pillar sacrifice thou one. 211
 Around each base rub thrice the blackning blood,
 And burn the curling shavings of the hoof ;
 And of the forehead locks thou also burn,
 The yellow galls, with equal care preserv'd,
 Pour at the seventh statue from the north."

He listen'd ; and on her his eyes intent
 Perceiv'd her not ; and now she disappear'd :
 So deep he ponder'd her important words.

And now had morn aris'n, and he perform'd
 Almost the whole enjoin'd him ;—he had reach'd 220
 The seventh statue, pour'd the yellow galls,
 The forelock from his left he had releas'd,
 And burnt the curling shavings of the hoof,
 Moistened with myrrh ; when suddenly a flame
 Spired from the fragrant smoke, nor sooner spired
 Down sunk the brazen fabric at his feet,
 He started back, gazed—nor could aught but gaze—
 And cold dread stiffen'd up his hair flower-twined :
 Then with a long and tacit step, one arm
 Behind, and every finger wide outspread, 230
 He look'd and totter'd on a black abyss.

He thought he sometimes heard a distant voice
 Breathe through the cavern's mouth, and further on
 Faint murmurs now, now hollow groans reply.
 Therefor suspended he his crook above,
 Dropt it, and heard it rolling step by step.
 He enter'd; and a mingled sound arose
 Like that—when shaken from some temple's roof
 By zealous hand, they, and their fretted nest,—
 Of birds that wintering watch in Memnon's tomb,
 And tell the Halcyons when Spring first returns. 241

End of Book the Second.

GEHIR.

BOOK III.

O FOR the spirit of that matchless man
Whom nature led throughout her whole domain,
While he, embodied, breath'd ethereal air.

Though panting in the play-hour of my youth,
I drank of Avon, too, a dang'rous draught,
That rous'd within the fev'rish thirst of song—
Yet, never may I trespass o'er the stream
Of jealous Acheron, nor alive descend
The silent and unsearchable abodes
Of Erebus and Night ; nor unchastiz'd 10
Lead up long absent heroes into day.
When on the pausing theatre of earth
Eve's shad'wy curtain falls, can human hand
Bring back the far off intercepted hills
Grasp the round rock-built turret, or arrest
The glitt'ring spires that pierce the brow of Heav'n?
Rather, can any, with outstripping voice
The parting Sun's gigantic strides recal ?

Twice heard was Gehir ; twice th' Iberian king
Thought it the strong vibration of the brain 20

That struck upon his ear ; but now descried
 A form, a man, come nearer ; as he came
 His unshorn hair, grown soft in these abodes,
 Waved back, and scatter'd a thin hoary light.
 Living, men call'd him Aroar ; but no more
 In celebration, or recording verse,
 His name is heard, no more by Arnon's side
 The well-wall'd city which he rear'd remains.
 Gebir was now undaunted, for the brave .
 When they no longer doubt, no longer fear, 30
 And would have spoken, but the shade began.

“ Brave son of Hesperus ! no mortal hand
 Has led thee hither, nor without the Gods
 Penetrate thy firm feet the vast profound,
 Thou knowest not that here thy fathers lie,
 The race of Sadad ? their's was loud acclaim
 When living ; but their pleasure was in war ;
 Triumphs and hatred followed : I myself
 Bore, men imagin'd, no inglorious part ;
 The Gods thought otherwise ! * by whose decree 40

* Let not this be considered as an imitation of the verse

“ *Diis aliter visum.*”.

There is no great merit in quoting old quotations, however apposite, and I am of opinion that this singular passage has generally been misunderstood. Among all the fooleries which men have combined in their ideas of a deity, can there be a greater than that gods and mortals have a separate sense of right and wrong ? Were it really the case,

Depriv'd of life, and more, of death depriv'd,
 I still hear shrieking, through the moonless night,
 Their discontented and deserted shades.
 Observe these horrid walls, this rueful waste !
 Here some refresh the vigor of the mind
 With contemplation and cold penitence :
 Nor wonder while thou hearest, that the soul
 Thus purified, hereafter may ascend
 Surmounting all obstruction, nor ascribe
 The sentence to indulgence : each extreme 50
 Has tortures for ambition ; to dissolve
 In everlasting langour, to resist
 Its impulse, but in vain ; to hear, frequent,
 Nay, to take counsel from, and seek resource,
 Be sooth'd by, or be scott at by, O Heaven !
 The vilest of mankind : to be enclosed
 Within a limit, and that limit fire :
 Sever'd from happiness, from eminence,
 And flying, but hell bars us, from ourselves.

Yet rather all these torments most endure 60
 Than solitary pain, and sad remorse,

religious men would become daily less zealous, and the life of the
 wicked be but a game of chance. For the virtues of the one party
 might not stand for virtues ; nor the vices of the other be marked for
 vices. There never was a doctrine more calculated to make the
 generality of men despond, and to keep them dependent on the
догматамъ.

And tow'ring thoughts on their own breast o'erturn'd,
 And piercing to the heart: such penitence,
 Such contemplation, theirs! thy ancestors
 Bear up against them, nor will they submit
 To conquering Time th' asperities of Fate:
 Yet, could they but revisit earth once more,
 How gladly would they Poverty embrace,
 How labour, even for their deadliest foe!
 It little now avails them to have rais'd 70
 Beyond the Syrian regions, and beyond
 Phœnicia, trophies, tributes, colonies,
 To have heard infants lisp the Gadite name:
 Follow thou me: mark what it all avails."

Him Gebir followed, and a roar confused
 Rose from a river, rolling in it's bed,
 Not rapid—that would rouse the wretched souls—
 Nor calmly—that might lull them to repose.
 But with dull weary lapses it still heaved
 Billows of bale, heard low, but heard afar; 80
 For, when hell's iron portals let out Night,
 Often men start, and shiver at the sound,
 And lie so silent on the restless couch
 They hear their own hearts beat. Now Gebir breath'd
 Another air, another sky beheld.
 Twilight broods here, lull'd by no nightingale,
 Nor waken'd by the shrill lark dewy-winged,
 But glowing with one sullen sunless heat.

Beneath his foot nor sprouted flower nor herb,
 Nor chirp'd a grasshopper ; above his head 90
 Phlegethon form'd a fiery firmament :
 Part were sulphureous clouds involving, part
 Shining like solid ribs of moulten brass :
 For the fierce element which else aspires
 Higher and higher, and lessens to the sky,
 Below earths adamantine arch rebuffed :

Gebir, though now such languor held his limbs,
 Scarce aught admir'd he, yet he this admir'd ;
 And thus address'd him then the conscious guide.
 " Beyond that river lie the happy fields. 100
 From them fly gentle breezes, which, when drawn
 Against yon crescent convex, but unite
 Stronger with what they could not overcome.
 Thus they that scatter freshness through the groves
 And meadows of the fortunate, and fill
 With liquid light the marble bowl of earth,
 And give her blooming health and sprightly force—
 Their fire no more diluted, nor its darts
 Blunted by passing through thick myrtle bowers,
 Neither from odors rising half dissolved, 110
 Point forward Phlegethon's eternal flame :
 And this horizon is the spacious bow
 Whence each ray reaches to the world above.
 Fire rules the realms of pleasure and of pain.
 Parent and element of elements,

Changing, and yet unchanged, pervading heaven
 Purest, and then reviewing all the stars :
 All croud around him in their orbits, all
 In legions for that radiant robe contend
 Allotted them, unseam'd and undefil'd, 120
 Then, saturate with what their nature craves,
 Unite the grateful symphony of guests,
 Take short repose, and with slow pace return,
 And not the glowing oceans of the sun
 Fire fills alone, and draws there smaller streams,
 And dashes them on crystal cliffs of hail,
 And filters through black clouds and fleecy snows—
 But penetrates each cold and blue abyss
 Of trackless waves, and each white glimmering gem
 That crowns the victim's immolated brow." 130

The hero pausing, Gebir then besought
 What region held his ancestors, what clouds,
 What waters, or what Gods, from his embrace,
 " Young man," replied the hero, " some declare
 That they the spirit, when it is itself,
 Have wakened on ; and with fixt eyes beheld
 Fixt eyes ; both stricken speechless, both would speak ;
 Both stretch'd their kindred arms and would embrace.
 That spirit, which thus struggles in its flight
 To some one dearest object, with a will 140
 Omnipotent, ne'er, after this, returns :
 Neither can mortal see departed friends,

Or they see mortals: if indeed they could,
 How Care would furrow up their flow'ry fields,
 What asps and adders bask in every beam !
 Then oft might faithful fondness, from the shades
 See its beloved in another's arms,
 And curse immoral laws, immodest vows,
 Elysium, and the vanity of soul.
 She who, evading Modesty, dares take 150
 With sacrilegious incest most accurst—
 The lamp of marriage from a husband's tomb,
 And beckon up another, to defile
 A bed new-litter'd, a mere tavern-stall,
 Biting her chain, bays body ; and despair
 Awakes the furies of insatiate lust.
 Others, if worse be any, float immerst
 In prisons blackly green with ropy slime,
 Where toughens the brown fungus, brittle stalk'd:
 Their grosser spirits with the putrid air 160
 Amalgamate, and in due time, ferment
 Seed heretofore inert ; hence crawls gay-wing'd
 The gadfly ? hence trails forth the fulsome snake.
 Living, they never own'd that Nature's face
 Was lovely, never with fond awe beheld
 On her parental bosom Truth repose !"
 He paus'd ; then sudden, as if rous'd, renew'd.

" But come, if ardor urges thee, and force,
 Suffices—mark me, Gebir, I unfold

No fable to allure thee—rise, behold 170
 Thy ancestors ! and lo ! with horrid gasp,
 The panting flame above their heads recoil'd,
 And thunder thro' his heart and life-blood throb'd.
 Such sound could human organs once conceive,
 Cold, speechless, palsied, not the soothing voice
 Of friendship, or almost of Deity,
 Could raise the wretched mortal from the dust ;
 Beyond man's home condition they ! with eyes
 Intent, and voice desponding, and unheard .
 By Aroar, though he tarried at his side, 180
 " They know me not," cried Gebir, " O my sires,
 Ye know me not !—They answer not, nor hear.
 How distant are they still ! what sad extent
 Of desolation must we overcome !
 Aroar, what wretch that nearest us ? what wretch
 Is that with eyebrows white, and slanting brow ?
 Listen ! him yonder, who, bound down supine,
 Shrinks, yelling, from that sword there, engine-hung.
 He too amongst my ancestors ? I hate
 The despot, but the dastard I despise. 190
 Was he our countryman ?"

" Alas, O King !

Iberia bore him, but the breed accurst !
 Inclement winds blew blighting from north-east."
 " He was a Warrior, then, nor fear'd the Gods ?"
 " Gebir, he fear'd the Demons, not the Gods ;

Though them, indeed, his daily face adored,
 And was no warrior ; yet the thousand lives
 Squander'd, as stones to exercise a sling !
 And the tame cruelty, and cold caprice—
 Oh madness of mankind ! address, adored !
 O Gebir ! what are men, or where are Gods !
 Behold the giant next him : how his feet
 Plunge fount'ring mid the marshes, yellow-flower'd.
 His restless head just reaching to the rocks,
 His bosom tossing with black weeds besmear'd,
 How writhes he 'twixt the continent and isle.
 What tyrant with more insolence e'er claim'd
 Dominion ? when, from th' heart of Usury
 Rose more intense the pale-flam'd thirst for gold ?
 And call'd, forsooth, *Deliverer* ! False or fools 210
 Who prais'd the dull-ear'd miscreant, or who hoped
 To soothe your folly and disgrace with praise.

Hearest thou not the harp's gay simpering air,
 And merriment afar ! Then come, advance—
 And now behold him ! mark the wretch accurst,
 Who sold his people to a rival king.
 Self-yoked they stood, two ages unredeem'd."

" O horror ! what pale visage rises there !
 Speak Aroar—me, perhaps, mine eyes deceive,
 Inured not, yet methinks they still descry 220
 Such crimson haze as sometimes drowns the moon.

What is yon awful sight ? why thus appears
That space between the purple and the crown ? ”

I will relate their stories when we reach
Our confines, said the guide, for thou, O King,
Differing in both from all thy countrymen—
Seest not their stories, and hast seen their fates.
But while we tarry, lo again the flame
Riseth, and murmuring hoarse points straiter, haste,
’Tis urgent ; we must on, ”

“ Then, O, adieu, ” 230

Cried Gebir, and groan’d loud ; at last a tear
Burst from his eyes, turn’d back, and he exclaim’d

“ Am I deluded ? O ye powers of hell !

Suffer me—O my fathers !—am I torne—

He spake, and would have spoken more, but flames

Enwrapt him round and round intense ; he turn’d

And stood held breathless in a ghost’s embrace.

“ Gebir, my son, desert me not, I heard

Thy calling voice, nor fate withheld me more.

One moment yet remains : enough to know 240

Soon will my torments, soon will thine, expire.

O that I e’er exacted such a vow !

When dipping in the victim’s blood thy hand

First thou withdrewest it, looking in my face

Wondering ; but when the priest my will explain’d,

Then swearest thou, repeating what he said,

How against Egypt thou wouldst raise that hand
 And bruise the seed first risen from our line.
 Therefor, in death what pangs have I endured !
 Rackt on the fiery centre of the sun 250
 Twelve years I saw the ruin'd world roll round.
 Shudder not ; I have borne it ; I deserved
 My wretched fate ; be better thine ; farewell."

" O stay, my father ! stay one moment more.
 Let me return thee that embrace—'tis past—
 Aroar ! how could I quit it unreturn'd !
 And now the gulph divides us, and the waves
 Of sulphur bellow through the blue abyss.
 And is he gone for ever ! and I come 259
 In vain ?" Then sternely said the guide. " In vain !
 Sayst shou ; what wouldst thou more ? alas, O prince,
 None come for pastime here ! but is it nought
 To turn thy feet from evil—is it nought
 Of pleasure to that shade if they are turn'd ?
 For this thou camest hither : he who dares
 To penetrate this darkness, nor regards
 The dangers of the way, shall reascend
 In glory, nor the gates of hell retard
 That man, nor demon's, nor man's art prevail.
 Once in each hundred years, and only once, 270
 Whether by some rotation of the world,
 Or whether will'd so by some pow'r above,
 This flaming arch starts back : each realm descries

Its opposite ; and Bliss from her repose
Freshens and feels her own security."

" Security !" cried out the Galile king,
" And feel they not compassion ? "

" Child of Earth, "

Calmly said Aroar at his guest's surprize,
" Some so disfigur'd by habitual crimes,
Others are so exalted, so refined, 280
So permeated by Heav'n, no trace remains
Graven on earth : here Justice is supreme ;
Compassion can be but where passions are.
Here are discover'd those who tortured Law
To silence or to speech, as pleased themselves ;
Here also those who boasted of their zeal,
And lov'd their country for the spoils it gave.
Hundreds, whose glitt'ring merchandize the lyre
Dazzled vain wretches, drunk with flattery,
And wafted them in softest airs to Heav'n, 290
Doom'd to be still deceiv'd, here still attune
The wonted strings and fondly woo applause ;
Their wish half granted, they retain they own
But madden at the mock'ry of the shades.
While on the river's other side there grow
Deep olive groves : there, other ghosts abide :
Blest indeed they ; but not supremely blest.
We cannot see beyond. Here some observ'd
Religious rites, some hospitality :
Strangers, who from the good old men retir'd, 300
Clos'd the gate gently, lest from generous use

Shutting and opening of it's own accord,
 It shake unsettled slumbers off their couch:
 Some stopt revenge athirst for slaughter, some
 Sow'd the slow olive for a race unborn.
 These had no wishes; therefor none are crown'd:
 But their's are tufted banks, their's umbrage, their's
 Enough of sun-shine to enjoy the shade
 And breeze enough to lull them to repose."

"Then," Gebir cried, "illustrious host, proceed.
 Bring me among the wonders of a reign 311
 Admir'd by all, but like a tale admir'd.
 We take our children from their cradled sleep,
 And on their fancy, from our own, impress
 Etherial forms and adulating fates:
 But, ere departing for such scenes ourselves,
 We seize their hands, we hang upon their neck,
 Our beds cling heavy round us with our tears,
 Agony strives with agony. Just Gods!
 Wherefor should wretched mortals thus believe, 320
 Or wherefor should they hesitate to die?"

Thus while he question'd, all his strength dissolv'd
 Within him; thunder shook his troubled brain;
 He started; and the cavern's mouth survey'd
 Near; and beyond, his people; he arose,
 And bent towards them his bewilder'd way. 326

End of Book the Third.

GEBIR.

BOOK IV.

HE who could pity, he who could obey,
 Flatter'd both female youth and princely pride,
 The same ascending from amidst the shades
 Show'd Pow'r in frightful attitude: the queen
 Marks the surpassing prodigy, and strives
 To shake off terror in her crowded court,
 And wonders why she trembles; nor suspects
 How Love and Terror take each other's form
 By birth and secret compact how allied.
 Vainly, to conscious virgins I appeal, 10
 Vainly with crouching tigers, prowling wolves,
 Rocks, precipices, waves, storms, thunderbolts,
 All his immense inheritance, would Fear
 The simplest heart—should Love refuse—assail:
 Agree—the maiden's pillow'd ear imbibes
 Constancy, honor, truth, fidelity,
 Beauty, and ardent lips, and longing arms;
 Then fades in glimmering distance half the scene.
 'Tis her beloved! not to her! ye Pow'rs!
 What doubting maid exacts the vow? behold 20
 Above the myrtles his protesting hand.

Lo ! mirror of delight in cloudless days !
 Lo ! thy reflection : 'twas when I exclaim'd
 With kisses hurried as if each foresaw
 Their end, and reckon'd on our broken bonds,
 And could at such a price such loss endure—
 “ O what, to faithful lovers, met at morn,
 What half so pleasant as imparted fears.”
 How many a night serene, shall I behold
 Those warm attractive orbits, close inshrined 30
 In ether, over which Love's column rose
 Marmoreal, trophied round with golden hair.
 Within the valley of one lip, unseen,
 Love slumber'd, one his unstrung bow impress'd,
 Sweet wilderness of soul-entangling charms !
 Led back by Memory, and each blissful maze
 Retracing, me with magic power detain
 Those dimpled cheeks, those temples, violet-tinged,
 Those lips of nectar, and those eyes of heav'n !

Charoba, though indeed she never drank 40
 The liquid pearl, or twined the nodding crown ;
 Or, when she wanted cool and calm repose,
 Dream'd of the crawling asp and grated tomb,
 Was wretched up to royalty ! the jibe
 Struck her, most piercing where love pierc'd before,
 From those whose freedom centers in their tongue
 Handmaids, and pages sleek, and courtiers aged.
 Congratulations here, there prophecies,

Here children, not repining at neglect
 While tumult thus sweeps amplest room for play ; 50
 Every-where questions, answer'd ere begun,
 Every-where groups, for every-where alarm.
 Thus, winter gone ; nor spring, tho' near, arriv'd,
 Urg'd slanting onward by the bickering breeze
 That issues from beneath Aurora's car,
 Shudder the sombrous waves ; at every beam
 More vivid, more by every breath impel'd,
 Higher and higher up the fretted rocks
 Their turbulent refulgence they display.
 Madness, which like the spiral element, 60
 The more it seizes on, the fiercer burns,
 Hurried them blindly forward, and involved
 In flame the senses, and in gloom the soul.

Determin'd to protect the country's gods,
 Still asking their protection, they adjure
 Each other to stand forward, and insist
 With zeal, and trample under foot the slow ;
 And disregardful of the Sympathies
 Divine, those Sympathies whose delicate hand
 Touching the very eyeball of the heart, 70
 Awakens it, not wounds it nor inflames.—
 Blind wretches ! they with desperate embrace
 Hang on the pillar till the temple fall.
 Woe to the wiser few, who dare to cry
 “ People ! these men are not your enemies :

Enquire their errand ; and resist when wrong'd."

Together, childhood, priesthood, womanhood,

The scribes and elders of the land exclaim

" Seek they not hidden treasure in the tombs ?

Raising the ruins, leveling the dust, 80

Who can declare whose ashes they disturb !

Build they not fairer cities than our own,

Extravagant enormous apertures

For light, and portals larger, open courts,

Where all ascending all are unconfin'd,

And wider streets in purer air than ours ?

Temples quite plain, with equal capitals,

They build, nor bearing gods like ours imbost.

O profanation ! O our ancestors !"

Though all the vulgar hate a foreign face, 90

It more offends weak eyes and homely age,

Dalica most ; who thus her aim pursued.

" My promise, O Charoba, I perform.

Proclaim to gods and men a festival

Throughout the land, and bid the strangers eat :

Their anger thus we haply may disarm."

" O Dalica, the grateful queen replied,

Nurse of my childhood, soother of my cares,

Preventer of my wishes, of my thoughts,

O pardon youth, O pardon royalty ! 100

If hastily to Dalica I sued,

Fear might impel me, never could distrust.
 Go then, for wisdom guides thee, take my name,
 Issue what most imports and best beseems,
 And Sov'reignty shall sanction the decree."

And now Charoba was alone, her heart
 Grew lighter ; she sat down, and she arose,
 She felt voluptuous tenderness, but felt
 That tenderness for Dalica : she prais'd
 Her kind attention, warm solicitude, 110
 Her wisdom—for what wisdom pleas'd like her's !
 She was delighted : should she not behold
 Gebir ? she blush'd ; but she had words to speak ,
 She formed them, and reform'd them, with regret
 That there was somewhat lost with every change :
 She could replace them—what would that avail—
 Moved from their order they have lost their charm.
 While thus she strew'd her way with softest words,
 Others grew up before her, but appear'd
 A plenteous, rather than perplexing choice. 120
 She rubb'd her palms with pleasure, heav'd a sigh,
 Grew calm again, and thus her thoughts revolv'd.

— " But he descended to the tombs ! the thought
 Thrills me, I must avow it, with affright.
 And wherefor ? shews he not the more belov'd
 Of heaven, or how ascends he back to day.
 Then, has he wrong'd me ? Could he want a cause

Who has an army, and was bred to reign ?
 And yet no reasons against rights he urged.
 He threaten'd not ; proclaim'd not ; 'I approach'd,
 He hasten'd on ; I spake, he listen'd ; wept, 131
 He pity'd me : he lov'd me, he obey'd ;
 He was a conqueror, still am I a queen."

She thus indulged fond fancies, when the sound
 Of tymbrels and of cymbals struck her ear,
 And horns, and howlings of wild jubilee.
 She fear'd ; and listen'd, to confirm her fears ;
 One breath sufficed, and shook her refluent soul.
 Smiting, with simulated smile constrain'd,
 Her beauteous bosom, " O, perfidious man, 140
 O cruel foe," she twice and thrice exclaim'd,
 O my companions equal-aged ! my throne,
 My people ! O how wretched to presage
 This day, how tenfold wretched to endure !"

She ceas'd, and instantly the palace rang
 With gratulation roaring into rage :
 'Twas her own people. " Health to Gebir ! health
 To our compatriot subjects ! to our queen
 Health and unfaded youth ten thousand years !"
 Then went the victims forward crown'd with flowers,
 Crown'd were tame crocodiles, and boys whiterobed
 Guided their creaking crests across the stream. 152
 In gilded barges went the female train,

And, hearing others ripple near, undrew
 The veil of sea-green awning, if they found
 Whom they desired, how pleasant was the breeze?
 If not, the frightful water forced a sigh.
 Sweet airs of music ruled the rowing palms;
 Now rose they glistening and aslant reclined,
 Now they descended, and with one consent 160
 Plunging, seem'd swift each other to pursue,
 And now to tremble wearied o'er the wave.
 Beyond, and in the suburbs, might be seen
 Crouds of all ages; here in triumph passed
 Not without pomp, though raised with rude device,
 The monarch and Charoba: there a throng
 Shone out in sunny whiteness o'er the reeds:
 Nor could luxuriant youth, or lapsing age
 Propt by the corner of the nearest street—
 With aching eyes and tottering knees intent, 170
 Loose leathery neck and wormlike lip outstretched,
 Fix long the ken upon one form; so swift
 Through the gay vestures fluttering on the bank,
 And through the bright-eyed waters dancing round,
 Wove they their wanton wiles, and disappear'd.

Meanwhile, with pomp, august and solemn, borne
 On four white camels, tinkling plates of gold,
 Heralds before, and Ethiop slaves behind,
 Each with the signs of office in his hand,
 Each on his brow the sacred stamp of years, 180

The four ambassadors of peace proceed.
 Rich carpets bear they, corn and generous wine ;
 The Syrian olive's cheerful gifts they bear :
 With stubborn goats that eye the mountain-tops
 Askance, and riot with reluctant horn,
 And steeds and stately camels in their train.
 The king, who sat before his tent, descried
 The dust rise redden'd from the setting sun :
 Through all the plains below the Gadite men
 Were resting from their labor : some surveyed 190
 The spacious scite, ere yet obstructed, walls
 Already, soon will roofs have, interposed.
 Nor is the glory of no price, to take
 The royal city in, as these presume
 Some ate their frugal viands on the steps,
 Contented : some remembering home, prefer
 The cots bare rafters o'er the high gilded dome,
 And sing, for often sighs, too, end in song,
 " In smiling meads how sweet the brook's repose
 " To the rough ocean and red restless sands !" 200
 But others trip along with hasty steps,
 Whistling, and fix too soon on their abodes :
 Haply and one amongst them with his spear
 Measures the lintel, if so great its height
 As will receive him with his helm unlower'd.

But silence went throughout, e'en thoughts were
 hushed

When to full view of navy and of camp
 Now first expanded the bareheaded train.
 Majestic, unassuming, unappall'd, 210
 Onward they marched; and neither to the right
 Nor to the left, though there the city stood,
 Turn'd they their sober eyes: and now they reach'd
 Within a few steep paces of ascent
 The lone pavilion of the Iberian King.
 He saw them, he awaited them, he rose;
 He hail'd them "*Peace be with you.*" they replied
 "King of the western world, be with you peace." 218

End of Book the Fourth.

GEBIR.

BOOK V.

ONCE a fair city, courted then by kings,
 Mistress of nations, throng'd by palaces,
 Raising her head o'er destiny, her face
 Glowing with pleasure and with palms refreshed,
 Now, pointed at by Wisdom or by Wealth,
 Bereft of beauty, bare of ornaments,
 Stood, in the wilderness of woe, Masar.
 Ere far advancing, all appear'd a plain,
 Treacherous and fearful mountains, far advanced.
 Her glory so gone down, at human step 10
 The fierce hyæna, frightened from the walls,
 Bristled his rising back, his teeth unsheathed,
 Drew the long growl and with slow foot retired.
 Still were remaining some of ancient race,
 And ancient arts were now their sole delight.
 With Time's first sickle they had marked the hour
 When at their incantation would the Moon
 Start back, and shuddering shed blue blasted light.
 The rifted rays they gather'd, and immersed
 In potent portion of that wondrous wave 20

Which, hearing rescued Israel, stood erect,
And led her armies through his crystal gates.

Hither—none shared her way, her counsel none—
Hied the Masarian Dalica : 'twas night,
And the still breeze fell languid on the waste.
She, tired with journey long, and ardent thoughts,
Stopt ; and before the city she descried
A female form emerge above the sands :
Intent she fix'd her eyes, and on herself
Relying, with fresh vigor bent her way ;
Nor disappear'd the woman ; but exclaim'd—
One hand retaining tight her folded vest—
“ Stranger ! who loathest life, there lies Masar.
Begone, nor tarry longer, or, ere morn,
The cormorant, in his solitary haunt
Of insulated rock or sounding cove,
Stands on thy bleached bones, and screams for prey.
My lips can scatter them a hundred leagues,
So shrivel'd in one breath, as all the sands
We tread on, could not in as many years. 40
Wretched, who die nor raise their sepulchre !
Therefor begone.”

“ But, Dalica, unaw'd,
Tho' in her wither'd but still firm right-hand
Held up with imprecations, hoarse and deep,
Glimmer'd her brazen sickle, and inclosed

Within it's figur'd curve the fading moon—
 Spake thus aloud. " By yon bright orb of Heaven,
 In that most sacred moment when her beam
 Guided first thither by the forked shaft, 50
 Strikes thro' the crevice of Arishtah's tower,"

" Sayst thou? " astonished cried the sorceress,
 Woman of outer darkness, fiend of death,
 From what inhuman cave, what dire abyss,
 Hast thou invisible that spell oerheard?
 What potent hand hath touched thy quicken'd corse,
 What song dissolved thy cearments ; who unclosed
 Those faded eyes, and fill'd them from the stars?
 But if with inextinguished light of life
 Thou breathest, soul and body unamerst, 60
 Then, whence that invocation ; who hath dared
 Those hallow'd words, divulging, to profane?
 Then Dalica—

" To heaven, not earth, addrest,
 Prayers for protection cannot be profaned."

Here the pale sorceress turn'd her face aside,
 Wildly, and mutter'd to herself, amazed,
 " I dread her who, alone, at such an hour,
 Can speak so stangely ; who can close combine
 The words of reason with our gifted rites ; 70
 Yet will I speak once more — If thou hast seen
 The city of Charoba, hast thou marked
 The steps of Dalica? "

“ What then ? ”

“ The tongue
Of Dalica has then our rites divulged.”

“ Whose rites ? ”

“ Her sisters, mothers, and, her own.”

“ Never.”

“ How sayst thou never ? one would think, 80
Presumptuous, thou wert Dalica.”

“ I am,
Woman, and who art thou ? ” with close embrace,
Clung the Masarian round her neck, and cried
“ Art thou, then, not my sister ? ah I fear
The golden lamps and jewels of a court
Deprive thine eyes of strength and purity :
O Dalica, mine watch the waning moon,
For ever patient in our mothers art,
And rest on Heaven suspended ; where the founts 90
Of Wisdom rise ; where sounds the wings of Power.
Studies intense of strong and stern delight !
And thou too, Dalica, so many years
Wean'd from the bosom of thy native land,
Returnest back, and seekest true repose.
O what more pleasant than the short-breath'd sigh,
When laying down your burden at the gate,
And dizzy with long wandering, you embrace
The cool and quiet of a homespun bed.”

“ Alas,” said Dalica, “ tho' all commend 100
This choice, and many meet with no controul,

Yet, none pursue it ! Age, by Care oppress,
 Feels for the couch, and drops into the grave.
 The tranquil scene lies further still from Youth.
 Phrenzied Ambition and desponding Love
 Consume Youth's fairest flow'rs; compar'd with Youth
 Age has a something something like repose.
 Myrthyr, I seek not here a boundary
 Like the horizon, which, as you advance,
 Keeping its form and color still recedes : 110
 But mind my errand, and my suit perform.

Twelve years ago Charoba first could speak.
 If her indulgent father asked her name,
 She would indulge him too, and would reply
 "*What? why, Charoba*"—rais'd with sweet surprise,
 And proud to shine a teacher in her turn.
 Shew her the graven sceptre; what its use—
 'Twas to beat dogs with, and to gather flies.
 She thought the crown a plaything to amuse
 Herself, and not the people, for she thought 120
 Who mimicked infant words might infant toys :
 But while she watched grave elders look with awe
 On such a bauble, she withheld her breath ;
 She was afraid her parents should suspect
 They had caught childhood from her in a kiss ;
 She blushed for shame, and fear'd for she believ'd.
 Yet was not courage wanting in the child.
 For I have often seen her with both hands

Shake a dry crocodile, of equal height,
 And listen to the shells within the scales, 130
 And fancy there was life, and yet apply
 The jagged jaws wide open to her ear.
 Past are three summers since she first beheld
 The ocean : all around her earnest wait
 Some exclamation of amazement wild.
 She coldly said, her long-lashed eyes abased,
 " Is this the mighty ocean ? is this all ! "
 That wond'rous soul Charoba once possessed,
 Capacious then as earth or heaven could hold,—
 Soul discontented with capacity— 140
 Is gone ; I fear, for ever : need I say
 She was enchanted by the wicked spells
 Of Gebir, whom with lust of power inflamed
 The western winds have landed on our coast.
 I since have watched her in each lone retreat,
 Have heard her sigh, and soften out the name ;
 Then would she change it for Egyptian sounds
 More sweet, and seem to taste them on her lips,
 Then loathe them—Gebir, Gebir still return'd.
 Who would repine, of reason not bereft ! 150
 For, soon the sunny stream of Youth runs down,
 And not a gadfly streaks the lake beyond.
 Lone in the gardens, on her gather'd vest
 How gently would her languid arm recline ;
 How often have I seen her kiss a flower,
 And on cool mosses press her glowing cheek.
 Nor was the stranger free from pangs himself,

Whether, by spell imperfect, or while brew'd
 The swelling herbs infected him with foam,
 Oft have the shepherds met him wandering 160
 Through unfrequented paths, oft overheard
 Deep groans, oft started from soliloquies,
 Which they believe assuredly were meant
 For Spirits who attended him unseen.
 But when from his illuded eyes retired
 That figure Fancy fondly chose to raise,
 For never had she formed so fair an one
 Herself, till Nature shew'd an archetype—
 He clasped the vacant air, and stood and gazed.
 Then, owning it was folly, strange to tell, 170
 Burst into peals of laughter at his woes :
 Next, when his passion had subsided, went
 Where from a cistern, green and ruin'd, oozed
 A little rill, soon lost ; there gather'd he
 Violets and harebells of a sister bloom,
 Twining complacently their tender stems
 With plants of tenderest pliability.
 These for a garland woven, for a crown
 Round, pithy rushes platted he—ere dusk
 The grass was whiten'd with their roots knipt off.
 These threw he, finisht, in the little rill, 181
 And stood surveying them with steady smile ;
 But, such a smile as that of Gebir, bids
 To Comfort a defiance, to Despair
 A welcome at whatever hour she please.

Had I observ'd him I had pitied him.
 I have observ'd Charoba. I have asked
 If she loved Gebir: "*love him!*" she exclaim'd,
 With such a start of terror, such a flush
 Of anger, "*I love Gebir? I in love?*" 190
 Then, looked so piteous, so impatient looked—
 But burst, before I answer'd, into tears.
 Then saw I, plainly saw I, twas not love.
 For, such her natural temper, what she likes
 She speaks it out, or rather, she commands.
 And could Charoba say with greater ease
 "*Bring me a water-melon from the Nile*"
 Than, if she lov'd him, "*Bring me him I love.*"
 Therefor the death of Gebir is resolved."

"Resolv'd indeed," cried Myrthyr, nought surpriz'd,
 Precious mine arts! I could without remorse 201
 Kill, tho I hold thee dearer than the day,
 E'en thee thyself, to exercise mine arts.
 Look yonder; mark yon pomp of funeral;
 Is this from fortune or from favoring stars?
 Dalica, look thou yonder, what a train!
 What weeping! O what luxury! come, haste,
 Gather me quickly up these herbs I dropt,
 And then away—hush! I must, unobserved,
 From those two maiden sisters pull the spleen; 210
 Dissemblers, how invidious they surround
 The virgin's tomb, where all but virgins weep."

“ Nay, hear me first,” cried Dalica, “ ’tis hard
To perish to attend a foreign king.”

“ Perish ! and may not then mine eye alone
Draw out the venom drop, and yet remain
Enough ? the portion cannot be perceived,”
Away she hasten’d with it to her home ;
And sprinkling thrice fresh sulphur oer the hearth,
Took up a spindle, with malignant smile, 220
And pointed to a woof, nor spake a word.
’Twas a dark purple ; and its dye was dread.

Plunged in a lonely house, to her unknown,
Now Dalica first trembled ; oer the roof
Wander’d her haggard eyes — ’twas some relief —
The massy stones, tho’ hewn most roughly, shew’d
The hand of man had once at least been there.
But from this object sinking back amazed,
Her bosom lost all consciousness’ and shook
As if suspended in unbounded space, 230
Her thus intranced the sister’s voice recall’d,
“ Behold it here ! dyed once again, ’tis done.”
Dalica stept, and felt beneath her feet
The slippery floor, with moulder’d dust bestrown.
But Myrthyri seized with bare, bold-sinew’d arm
The grey cerastes, writhing from her grasp,
And twisted off his horn ; nor fear’d to squeeze
The vicious poison from his glowing gums :

Nor wanted there the root of stunted shrub
 Which he lays ragged, hanging oer the sands, 240
 And whence the weapons of his wrath are death :
 Nor the blue urchin that with clammy fin
 Holds down the tossing vessel for the tides.

Together these her scient hand combined,
 And more she added ; dared I mention more.
 Which done, with words most potent, thrice she dipt
 The reeking garb, thrice waved it thro' the air :
 She ceased ; and suddenly the creeping wool
 Shrunk up with crisped driness in her hands,
 " Take this," she cried, and Gebir is no more. 250

End of Book the Fifth.

GEBIR.

BOOK VI.

NOW to Aurora, borne by dappled steeds,
 The sacred gate of orient pearl and gold,
 Smitten with Lucifer's light silver wand,
 Expanded slow in strains of harmony,
 The waves beneath, in purpling rows, like doves
 Glancing with wanton coyness tow'rd their queen,
 Heav'd softly : thus the damsels bosom heaves
 When, from her sleeping lovers downy cheek,
 To which so warily her own she brings
 Each moment nearer, she perceives the warmth 10
 Blithe warmth, of kisses fann'd by playful Dreams.
 Ocean, and earth, and heaven, was jubilee.
 For twas the morning, pointed out by Fate,
 When an immortal maid and mortal man
 Should share each others nature, knit in bliss.

The brave Iberians far the beach o'erspread
 Ere dawn, with distant awe : none hear the mew,
 None mark the curlew, flapping oer the field :
 Silence held all, and fond expectancy.

Now suddenly the conch above the sea 20
 Sounds, and goes sounding thro' the woods profound.
 They, where they hear the echo, turn their eyes ;
 But nothing see they, save a purple mist
 Roll from the distant mountain down the shore.
 It rolls, it sails, it settles, it dissolves.
 Now shines the Nymph to human eye reveal'd,
 And leads her Tamar timorous oer the waves.
 Immortals, crowding round, congratulate :
 The shepherd ; he shrinks back, of breath bereft.
 His vesture clinging closely round his limbs 30
 Unfelt, while they the whole fair form admire,
 He fears that he has lost it ; then he fears
 The wave has mov'd it ; most to look he fears.
 Scarce the sweet-flowing music he imbibes,
 Or sees the peopled ocean : scarce he sees
 Spio, with sparkling eyes, and Beréo
 Demure, and young Iöne, less renown'd,
 Not less divine, mildnatured Beauty form'd
 Her face, her heart Fidelity ; for Gods
 Design'd, a mortal, too, Iöne loved. 40
 These were the Nymphs elected for the hour
 Of Hesperus and Hymen ; these had strewn
 The bridal bed : these tuned afresh the shells,
 Wiping the green that hoarsen'd them within :
 These wove the chaplets ; and at night resolved
 To drive the dolphins from the wretched door.
 Gebir surveyed the concourse from the tents,

The Egyptian men around him ; 'twas observ'd
 By those below how wistfully he looked ;
 From what attention with what earnestness 50
 Now to his city, now to theirs, he waved
 His hand; and held it, while they spake, outspread.
 They tarried with him, and they shared the feast.
 They stoop'd with trembling hand from heavy jars
 The wines of Gades gurgling in the bowl,
 Nor bent they homeward till the moon appear'd
 To hang midway betwixt the earth and skies.
 'Twas then that leaning o'er the boy beloved,
 In Ocean's grot where Ocean was unheard,
 " Tamar !" the Nymph said gently, " come, awake !
 Enough to love, enough to sleep is given. 61
 Haste we away." This Tamar deem'd deceit,
 Spoken so fondly, and he kist her lips ;
 Nor blushed he then, for he was then unseen.
 But she arising bade the youth arise.
 " What cause to fly," said Tamar ; she replied
 " Ask none for flight, and feign none for delay.

" O am I then deceiv'd ! or am I cast
 From dreams of pleasure to eternal sleep,
 And when I cease to shudder cease to be !" 70
 She held the downcast bridegroom to her breast,
 Look'd in his face and charm'd away his fears.
 She said not " wherefor have I then embraced
 You, a poor shepherd, or at least, a man,

Myself a Nymph, that now I should deceive?"

She said not—Tamar did, and was ashamed.

Him overcome her serious voice bespake.

Tamar, depress thyself, and miseries

Darken and widen: yes, proud-hearted man!

The sea-bird rises as the billows rise; 80

Nor otherwise, when mountain floods descend,

Smiles the unsullied lotus glossy-hair'd;

Thou, claiming all things, leanest on thy claim,

Till overwhelm'd thro' incompliancy.

Tamar, some silent tempest gathers round!"

"Round whom, retorted Tamar, thou describe
The danger, I will dare it."

"Who will dare

What is unseen?"

"The man that is unblest,"

"But wherefore thou? It threatens not thyself,
Nor me, but Gebir and the Gadite host." 90

"The more I know the more a wretch am I,"
Groand deep the troubled youth, "still thou proceed."

"Oh seek not destin'd evils to divine,
Found soon enough when here; Oh cease the search,
Tis vain, tis impious, tis no gift of mine:

I will impart far better, will impart

What makes, when Winter comes, the Sun to rest
So soon on Ocean's bed his paler brow,

And Night to tarry so at Springs return.

And I will tell, sometimes, the fate of men 100

Who loose from drooping neck the restless arm,
 Adventurous, ere long nights had satisfied
 The sweet and honest avarice of love :
 How whirlpools have absorb'd them, storms o'er-
 whelm'd,
 And how amidst their struggles and their prayers
 The big wave blacken'd o'er the mouth supine :
 Then, when my Tamar trembles at the tale,
 Kissing his lips, half open with surprize,
 Glance from the gloomy story, and with glee
 Light on the fairer fables of the Gods. 110

Thus we may sport at leisure when we go
 Where, loved by Neptune and the Naid, loved
 By pensive Dryad pale, and Oread .
 The spritely Nymph whom constant Zephyr woes,
 Rhine rolls his berry-color'd wave : that Rhine
 What River from the Mountains ever came
 More stately ! most the simple crown adorns
 Of rushes, and of willows, intertwined
 With here and there a flower—his lofty brow,
 Shaded with vines, ^{and} misleto, and oak, 120
 He rears ; and mystic bards his fame resound.
 Or gliding opposite, th' Illyrian gulph
 Will harbour us from ill." While thus she spake,
 She touched his eye-lashes with libant lip
 And breath'd ambrosial odours ; o'er his cheek
 Celestial warmth suffusing : grief dispersed,

And strength and pleasure beam'd upon his brow :
 Then pointed she before him : first arose
 To his astonisht and delighted view
 The sacred isle that shrines the queen of love. 130
 It stood so near him, so acute each sense,
 That not the symphony of lutes alone,
 Or coo serene, or billing strife of doves,
 But, murmurs, whispers, nay, the very sighs
 Which he himself had utter'd once, he heard.
 Next, but long after, and far off, appear
 The cloudlike cliffs and thousand towers of Crete :
 Still further to the right, the Cyclades.
 Phœbus had rais'd, and fixt them, to surround
 His native Delos and aerial fane. 140
 He saw the land of Pelops host of Gods ;
 Saw the deep ridge where Corinth after stood,
 Beckning the serious with the smiling Arts
 Into the sunbright bay : unborn the maid
 That, to assure the bent-up hand unskill'd,
 Look'd oft ; but oft'ner fearing who might wake.
 He heard the voice of rivers : he descried
 Pindan Peneüs, and the slender Nymphs
 That tread his banks, but fear the thundering tide :
 These, and Amphrysos, and Apidanus, 150
 And poplar-crown'd Spercheos, and, reclined
 On restless rocks, Enipeus—where the winds
 Scatter'd above the weeds his hoary hair.
 Then, with Pirenè, and with Panopè,

Evenus troubled from paternal tears ;
 And last was Acheloüs, king of isles.
 Lacythus here, above rose Ithaca,
 Like a blue bubble, floating in the bay.
 Far onward, to the left, a glimm'ring light
 Obliquely glanced ; nor vanish'd ; he inquired 160
 Whence that arose : his consort thus replied.
 " Behold the vast Eridanus ! ere night
 We shall again behold him and rejoice.
 Of noble rivers none with mightier force
 Rolls his unwearied torrent to the main.
 And now Sicilian Etna rose to view.
 Darkness with light more horrid she confounds,
 Baffles the breath and dims the sight of day.
 Tamar grew giddy with astonishment,
 And looking up, held fast the bridal vest. 170
 He heard it roll above him, heard it roll
 Beneath, and felt it too, as he beheld,
 Hurl, from Earth's base, rocks, mountains, to the skies.

Meanwhile the nymph had fixt her eyes beyond,
 As seeing somewhat ; not intent on aught.
 He, more amazed than ever, then, exclaim'd
 " Is there another flaming isle ; is this
 Illusion ; thus past over, unobserved ? "

" Look yonder," cried the Nymph, without reply,
 " Look yonder !" Tamar look'd, and saw two isles

Where the waves whiten'd on the desart shore. 181

Then she continued. "That which intervenes
Scarcely the Nymphs themselves have known from
Fame :

But mark the furthest : there shall once arise,
From Tamar shall arise, 'tis Fate's decree,
A mortal man above all mortal praise.
Methinks already, tho' she equals Heav'n,
Towering Trinacria to Therapnè yields."

Tamar, who listen'd still amidst amaze,
Had never thought of progeny : he clasped 190
His arms with extasy around his bride,
And pleasure freshen'd her prophetic lips.
He thought too of his ancestors and home
When from amidst grey ocean first he caught
The heights of Calpe, sadden'd he exclaim'd
"Rock of Iberia ! fixt by Jove, and hung
With all his thunder-bearing clouds, I hail
Thy ridges, rough and cheerless ! what tho' Spring
Nor kiss thy brow nor deck it with a flower,
Yet will I hail thee ; hail thy flinty couch 200
Where Valor and where Virtue have reposed."

The Nymph said, sweetly smiling, "Fickle Man
Would not be happy could he not regret !
And I confess how, looking back, a thought
Has touched and tuned, or rather, thrill'd my heart,

Too soft for sorrow and too strong for joy.
 Fond foolish maid, 'twas with mine own accord,
 It sooth'd me, shook me, melted, drown'd, in tears.
 But weep not thou ; what cause hast thou to weep.
 Weep not thy country : weep not caves abhorr'd, 210
 Dungeons and portals that exclude the day.
 Gebir—tho' generous, just, humane—exhaled
 Rank venom from these mansions. Rest O King
 In Egypt thou ! nor, Tamar ! pant for sway.
 With horrid chorus, Pain, Diseases, Death,
 Stamp on the slippery pavement of the great
 And ring their sounding emptiness thro' earth,
 The Hour, in vain held back by War, arrives
 When Justice shall unite the Iberian hinds,
 And equal Egypt bid her shepherds reign. 220
 The fairest land dry-lashed could I forego
 Rather then crawl a subject ; corals, pearls,
 Confine me round, if Nymph can be confined,
 Twill not console me ! Kindness prest by Power
 Gives pride fresh tortures, and fresh bars constraint.
 And guard me, Heaven ! from that paternal care
 Which beats and bruises me with iron rods,
 Till I embrace them, and with tears protest
 That I am happy ! rather, when I sin,
 Shut me from love and hide me in the deep." 230

Now disappear the Liparean isles
 Behind, and forward hang th' Etrurian coasts,

Verdant with privet and with juniper.
 Now faith is plighted: piled on every hearth,
 Crackle the consecrated branches, heard
 Propitious, and from vases rough-embost
 Thro' the light ember falls the bubbling wine.
 And now, the charriot of the sun descends !
 The waves rush hurried from the foaming steeds :
 Smoke issues from their nostrils at the gate ; 240
 Which, when they enter, with huge golden bar
 Atlas and Calpé close across the main.
 They reach th' unfurrow'd Appennines. All hail
 Clime of unbounded liberty and love !
 Deep down beneath their feet, a river flow'd,
 Of varied view ; yet each variety
 So charming, that their eyes could scarce admire
 The many beauties that around them throng'd,
 Successive as the wave: aspiring elms
 Oer the wide water cast a mingled shade 250
 Of tendrils green and grapes of rosy hue.
 Among the branches thousand birds appear'd
 To raise their little throats, with trilling song
 Unwearied, but alas their trilling song
 Fast as it flow'd the roaring torrent drown'd.
 Some, unacquainted with the scene, unmoved
 By love of tuneful mate, on timid wing
 Fly from the th' eternal thunder of the waves ;
 But these content with humid woods, that yield
 The choicest moss to warm their callow young, 260

Brood over them ; nor shudder at the damp
 That falls for ever round each circled nest.
 Here craggy rocks arise ; the stream recoils
 Struggling ; & but hurried to the vast abyss
 Abruptly \ reascends in gloomy rain ;
 Bespangling in its way the scatterd herbs
 That cling around each lofty precipice
 Of wintry blasts regardless, and the reeds
 Which never shall amuse with shrill assay
 The valley or the grove, and tender flowers 270
 On virgin bosom never to repose.
 But all around them dart the wandering rays
 In myriads, and amid the fresh festoons
 Of pensile vines a hundred arches bend,
 Rais'd by the hand of Phœbus and of Jove,
 The seats of Iris. — Rise, Iberian Man !
 Rise, maid of Ocean ! I myself will rise.
 Vigorous with youth, with soaring soul endued,
 I feel not earth beneath me — lo I snatch 280
 The sunbeam, scorn the thunder, climb the skies,
 What force have you informd me with ! what sight
 Piercing thro' darkness and futurity,

Yonder, where sailing slow the clouds retire,
 How grand a prospect opens ! Alps o'er Alps
 Tower, to survey the triumphs that proceed.
 There, while the Garonne dances in the gloom
 Of larches, mid her Naids, or reclined

Leans on a broom-clad bank to watch the sports
 Of some far distant chamois silken-hair'd, 290
 The chaste Pyrene, drying up her tears,
 Finds, with your children, refuge : yonder, Rhine
 Lays his imperial sceptre at their feet.

What hoary form so vigorous, vast bends there ?
 Time, Time himself throws off his motly garb
 Figur'd with monstrous men and monstrous gods,
 And in pure vesture enters their pure fanes,
 A proud partaker of their festivals.
 Captivity led captive, War o'erthrown,
 They shall o'er Europe, shall o'er Earth extend
 Empire that seas alone and skies confine,
 And glory that shall strike the crystal stars. 302

End of Book the Sixth.

GEBIR.

BOOK VII.

WHAT mortal first, by various ills assail'd,
 Trampled by Tyranny, or scoft by scorn,
 Stung by remorse, or wrung by Poverty,
 Prime evil ! bade his native land farewel ?
 Wretched : but tenfold wretched, who resolv'd
 Against the waves to plunge th' expatriate keel,
 Deep with the richest harvest of his land !

Driven with that bleak blast which Winter leaves,
 Closing his palace-gates on Caucasus,
 Oft hath a berry risen forth a shade : 10
 From the same parent plant, another lies
 Deaf to the daily call of weary wind—
 Zephyrs pass by, and laugh at his distress.
 So falls it here : and, driven forth by Fate,
 On any rock may rest ; but evil eyes
 Light on the weak, or restless, who have fled
 The house of bondage or the house of birth.
 Suspicions, murmurs, treacheries, taunts, retorts,
 Attend the brighter banners that invade ;
 And the first horn of hunter, pale with want, 20
 Sounds to the chase ; the second to the war.

The long awaited day at last arrived
 When linkt together by the seven-arm'd Nile,
 Egypt with proud Iberia should unite,
 Here the tartessian, there the Gadite, tents
 Rang with impatient pleasure : here engaged
 Woody Nebrissa's quiver-bearing crew,
 Contending warm with amicable skill :
 While those of Durius raced along the beach,
 And scatterd mud and jeers on those behind. 30
 The strength of Boetis, too, removed the helm,
 And stript the corslet off, and staunched the foot
 Against the mossy maple, while they tore
 Their quivering lances, from the hissing wound.
 Others pused forth the prows of their compeers ;
 And the wave, parted by the pouncing beak,
 Swells up the sides, and closes far astern.
 The silent oars now dip their level wings,
 And weary with strong stroke the whitening wave,
 Others, afraid of tardiness, return. 40
 Now, entering the still harbour, every surge
 Runs with a louder murmur up their keel,
 And the slack cordage rattles round the mast.

Sleepless, with pleasure and expiring fears,
 Had Gebir risen ere the break of dawn,
 And o'er the plains appointed for the feast,
 Hurried with ardent step : the swains admired
 What could so transversely sweep off the dew.

For never long one path had Gebir trod,
 Nor long, unheeding man, one pace preserved. 50
 Not thus Charoba. She despair'd the day.
 The day was present: true: yet she despair'd.
 In the too-tender and once tortur'd heart
 Doubts gather strength from habit, like disease;
 Fears, like the needle verging to the pole,
 Tremble and tremble into certainty,
 How often, when her maids with merry voice
 Call'd her, and told the sleepless queen 'twas morn,
 How often would she feign some fresh delay,
 And tell them (tho' they saw) that she arose. 60
 Next to her chamber, closed by cedar doors,
 A bath, of purest marble, purest wave,
 On its fair surface bore its pavement high.
 Arabian gold inclosed the crystal roof
 With fluttering boys adorn'd and girls unrobed;
 These, when you touch the quiet water, start
 From their aerial sunny arch, and pant
 Entangled midst each others flowry wreaths;
 And each pursuing is in turn pursued.

Here came at last, as ever wont at morn, 70
 Charoba: long she linger'd at the brink,
 Often sighed, and, naked as she was,
 Sat down, and leaning on the couch's edge,
 On the soft inward pillow of her arm
 Rested her burning cheek; she moved her eyes;
 She blushed; and blushing plunged into the wave.

Now brazen charriots thunder thro' each street,
 And neighing steeds paw proudly from delay.
 While o'er the palace breathes the dulcimer,
 Lute, and aspiring harp, and lisp'ing reed, 80
 Loud rush the trumpets, bursting thro' the throng,
 And urge the high-shoulder'd vulgar ; now are heard
 Curses and quarrels and constricted blows,
 Threats and defiance and suburban war.

Hark ! the reiterated clangor sounds !
 Now murmurs, like the sea, or like the storm,
 Or like the flames on forests move and mount
 From rank to rank, and loud and louder roll,
 Till all the people is one vast applause.

Yes. tis herself—Charoba—now the strife ! 90
 To see again a form so often seen.

Feel they some partial pang, some secret void,
 Some doubt of feasting those fond eyes again ?
 Panting imbibe they that refreshing sight
 To reproduce in hour of bitterness ?

She goes ; the king awaits her from the camp.
 Him she descried ; and trembled ere she reached
 Her car ; but shudder'd paler at his voice.

So the pale silver at the festive board
 Grows paler fill'd afresh and dew'd with wine ; 100
 So seems the tenderest herbage of the spring
 To whiten, bending from a balmy gale.

The beautiful queen alighting he received,
 And sighed to loose her from his arms ; she hung

A litte longer on them thro her fears.
 Her maidens follow'd her : and one that watch'd,
 One that had call'd her in the morn, observ'd
 How virgin passion with unfuel'd flame
 Burns into paleness ; while the blushing cheek
 Imagination heats and Shame imbues. 110

Between both nations, drawn in ranks, they pass.
 The priest, with linen ephods, linen robes,
 Attend their steps, some follow, some preceed,
 Where, cloath'd with purple intertwined with gold,
 Two lofty thrones commanded land and main.
 Behind and near them, numerous were the tents
 As freckled clouds oerfloat our vernal skies,
 Numerous as wander in warm moonlight nights
 Along Meander's or Cayster's marsh
 Swans, pliant-neckt, and village storks, revered.
 Throughout each nation moved the hum confused,
 Like that from myriad wings, oer Scythian cups
 Of frothy milk, conereted soon with blood.
 Throughout the fields the savory smoke ascends,
 And boughs and branches shade the hides unbroached.
 Some roll the flowery turf to form a seat,
 And others take the helmet—now resounds
 The signal !—queen and monarch mount the thrones
 The brazen clarion hoarsens : many leagues
 Above them, many to the south, the heron 130
 Rising with hurried croak and throat outstretched,
 Plows up the silvering surface of her plain.

Tottering, with age's zeal, and mischiefs haste,
 Now was discover'd Dalica : she reached
 The throne : she lean'd against the pedestal ;
 And now ascending stood before the king.
 Prayers for his health and safety she prefer'd,
 And on his head and oer his feet she threw
 Myrrh, nard, and cassia from three golden urns.
 His robe of native woof she next removed, 140
 And round his shoulders drew the garb accurst,
 And bow'd her head, and parted : soon the queen
 Saw the blood mantle in his manly cheeks,
 And fear'd, and faulting sought her lost replies,
 And blest the silence that she wished were broke.
 Alas, unconscious maiden ! Night shall close,
 And love, and sovereignty, and life, dissolve,
 And Egypt be one desert drench'd in blood.

When thunder overhangs the fountain heads,
 Losing their wonted freshness, every stream 150
 Grows turbid—grows with sickly warmth suffused—
 Thus were the brave Iberians, when they saw
 The King of nations from his throne descend.
 Scarcely, with pace uneven, knees unnerved,
 Reach'd he the waters : in his troubled ear
 They sounded murmuring drearily ; they rose
 Wild in strange colors to his parching eyes :
 They seem'd to rush around him, seem'd to lift
 From the receding earth his helpless feet.

He fell—Charoba shriek'd aloud—she ran— 160

Frantic with fears and fondness, wild with woe,

Nothing but Gebir dying she beheld.

The turban that betray'd its golden charge

Within, the veil that down her shoulders hung,

All fallen at her feet! the furthest wave

Creeping with silent progress up the sand,

Glided thro' all, and rais'd their hollow folds.

In vain they bore him to the sea, in vain

Rubb'd they his temples with the briney warmth.

He struggled from them, strong with agony, 170

He rose half up; he fell again; he cried

"Charoba!—O Charoba!" She embraced

His neck? and raising on her knee one arm,

Sighed when it moved not, when it fell she shrieked:

And clasping loud both hands above her head,

She call'd on Gebir, call'd on earth, on Heaven.

"Who will believe me; what shall I protest;

How innocent, thus wretched? God of Gods,

Strike me—who most offend thee most defy—

Charoba most offends thee—strike me, hurl 180

From this accursed land, this faithless throne.

O Dalica! see here the royal feast!

See here the gorgeous robe! you little thought

How have the demons dyed that robe with death.

Where are ye, dear fond parents! when ye heard

My feet in childhood pat the palace floor,

Ye started forth, and kist away surprize—
 Will ye now meet me ! low, and where, and when ?
 And must I fill your bosom with my tears,
 And, what I never have done, with your own !
 Why have the Gods thus punish'd me ? what harm
 Have ever I done them ? have I profaned
 Their temples ; ask'd too little or too much ? 190
 Proud if they granted, griev'd if they withheld ?
 O mother ! stand between your child and them !
 Appease them, soothe them, soften their revenge,
 Melt them to pity with maternal tears.
 Alas, but if you cannot !—they themselves
 Will then want pity rather than your child.
 O Gebir ! best of monarchs, best of men,
 What realm hath ever thy firm even hand
 Or lost by feebleness, or held by force !
 Behold, thy cares and perils how repaid ! 200
 Behold the festive day, the nuptial hour !
 Me miserable, desolate, undone !”

Thus raved Caroba : horror, grief, amaze
 Pervaded all the host : all eyes were fixt :
 All stricken motionless and mute—the feast
 Was like the feast of Cepheus, when the Sword
 Of Phineus, white with wonder, shook restrain'd,
 And the hilt rattled in his marble hand.
 She heard not, saw not ; every sense was gone ;
 One passion banish'd all ; dominion, praise, 210

The world itself was nothing—Senseless man—
 What would thy fancy figure now from worlds?
 There is no world to those that grieve and love.
 She hung upon his bosom, prest his lips,
 Breath'd, and would feign it his that she resorbed :
 She chafed the feathery softness of his veins,
 That swel'd out black, like tendrils round their vase
 After libation : lo ! he moves ! he groans !
 He seems to struggle from the grasp of Death,
 Charoba shriek'd, and fell away ; her hand 220
 Still clasping his ; a sudden blush oerspread
 Her pallid, humid cheek, and dissapear'd.
 'Twas not the blush of shame—what shame has woe?—
 'Twas not the genuine ray of Hope ; it flashed
 With shuddering glimmer thro' unscatter'd clouds ;
 It flash'd from passions rapidly opposed.

Never so eager, when the world was waves,
 Stood the less daughter of the ark, and tried
 Innocent this temptation ! to recall
 With folded vest, and casting arm, the dove— 230
 Never so fearful, when amidst the vines
 Rattled the hail, and when the light of Heaven
 Closed, since the wreck of Nature, first eclipsed—
 As she was eager for his life's return,
 As she was fearful how his groans might end.
 They ended :—cold and languid calm succeeds.
 His eyes have lost their lustre ; bnt his voice
 Is not unheard tho' short : he spake these words,

" And weepest thou, Charoba ! shedding tears
 More precious than the jewels that surround 240
 The neck of kings entomb'd !—then weep, fair queen !
 At once thy pity and my pangs assuage.
 Ah ! what is grandeur—glory—they are past !
 When nothing else, not life itself, remains,
 Still the fond mourner may be call'd our own.
 Should I complain of Fortune ? how she errs,
 Scattering her bounty upon barren ground,
 Slow to allay the lingering thirst of Toil ?
 Fortune 'tis true, may err, may hesitate ;
 Death follows close, nor hesitates nor errs. 250
 I feel the stroke ! I die ! " He would extend
 His dying arm ; it fell upon his breast.
 Cold sweat and shivering ran o'er every limb,
 His eyes grew stiff ; he struggled and expired !



